IN THE CLAIMS

1-17 (canceled)

18 (new): An apparatus for cutting and nibbling a sheet metal element in coil form, said apparatus comprising pulling devices for pulling said sheet metal element, which is delivered from a coil or bobbin and is driven by a pair of overlapped rollers, said sheet metal element being adapted to be intermittently moved, stopped and moved backward, said sheet metal element being cut or nibbled by top and bottom movable machining heads which are arranged above and under said sheet metal element and are transversely driven with respect to a feeding direction of said sheet metal element, said apparatus having two beams arranged transversely with respect to said sheet metal element feeding direction, wherein said beams being adapted to support cross guide elements which are arranged parallel to said beams, and said cross guide elements being adapted to support said movable machining heads, and wherein said apparatus further comprises a plurality of offset rollers performing a series of folding and counter-folding operations for providing said sheet metal element in a perfectly flat condition said machining heads being driven parallel to said beams and transversely of the sheet metal element feeding direction.

19 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said sheet metal element is continuously fed, with

intermittent feeding steps, stopping steps and backward moving steps.

20 (now): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said machining heads are rotatable about a transversely driven machining axis.

21 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said machining heads comprise a plurality of circularly arranged punch elements cooperating with corresponding die elements applied to said bottom head.

22 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said machining heads are rotatively driven by brushless motors.

23 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said apparatus further comprises a geared motor unit, said geared motor unit having a shaft supporting a toothed pulley entraining a toothed belt.

24 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 23, wherein said toothed belt rotatively drives a second toothed pulley, keyed on a supporting shaft.

25 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 24, wherein said supporting shaft drives a driving roller pair having rollers which are coupled with other pairs of feeding and driving rollers.

26 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said apparatus comprises a brushless motor assembly

having a toothed pulley which entrains a toothed belt rotatively driving a toothed pulley (28) keyed on a worm screw.

27 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 26, wherein said worm screw engages with a scroll element which operatively drives a top punch bearing head so as to cause said head to be translated along its guide elements.

28 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 26, wherein said worm screw cooperates with a second scroll element which operatively drives said bottom head.

29 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said apparatus further comprises a hydraulic cylinder which vertically drives a wing having, at a bottom portion thoreof, an eccentric lug, and selectively pressing a radially arranged punch against a corresponding die element therefor.

30 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 29, wherein said wing element is rotatively driven by said top head.

31 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 29, wherein said wing element, as it is lowered, causes said eccentric lug to be engaged in a cavity corresponding to a punch element to be operated.

32 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 29, wherein said wing element and the eccentric lug thereof, are rotatively driven by said head.

33 (new): An apparatus, according to claim 18, wherein said metal sheet element and said heads are controlled and timed by a numeric controlling center unit.